Call to Order:
Chairman BERGSTROM: Good afternoon. I’d like to call this meeting of the Charter Review Committee of the Cape Cod Regional Government, Assembly of Delegates to order. And we have a quorum.

Attendance:
Chairman BERGSTROM: I’m not going to take attendance because I can tell who's here. [Present: Chairman Ronald Bergstrom, Bill Doherty, Julia Taylor, and Ann Canedy. Absent: Austin Knight, Linell Grundman, and Suzanne McAuliffe.

Meeting Minutes 10/2/13 for Approval:
Chairman BERGSTROM: You should have in front of you or have been emailed a copy of the Minutes of 10/2/13. Are there any additions or corrections to the Minutes? If not, I need a Motion to Accept the Minutes.
Mr. DOHERTY: I'll move that.
Ms. TAYLOR: Second.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay. Moved and seconded. All those in favor, say “Aye.” Okay approved.

Background:
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay. We move on to public comment. Just a brief introduction.
The Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates has appointed a Charter Review Committee to look at potential changes in the County Charter. This is not the normal five-year review.
This review is prompted by suggestions from organizations such as the Business Roundtable, the League of Women Voters, and a Special Committee on County Governance that was appointed by the Commissioners to look into County Government and which issued a report I would say about a year ago, a year and a half ago recommending -- and the report has 14 changes recommended. And you can find it on the Barnstable County website under Assembly of Delegates.
We have taken it upon ourselves to look into the governance structure of Barnstable County. Currently we have each town elects at the biannual election an Assembly Delegate who serves in the Assembly of Delegates representing their town.
We also have three County Commissioners. Each one of them -- Bill is one of them -- each one of them is elected County-wide. They run from Bourne to Provincetown. They serve four years. They have staggered terms as much as possible.
And we also have currently an Administrator in the County government.
In considering other options for the structure of County government, this committee has come up with three alternatives.
One is the current structure of the 15 members, each member voting in proportion to their
towns’ percentage of the total vote of Barnstable County. So I have 3 percent, for instance.

Ms. TAYLOR: I have 15, almost 15.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Fifteen okay. And so that’s Falmouth has 15. Chatham has 3. I think Orleans probably has a little more than Chatham. That’s the current structure that I just described.

The second option is an Ordinance that was passed by the Assembly of Delegates which would enlarge the Board of County Commissioners to five. Instead of being elected County-wide, they would be elected by districts.

We would divide the Cape up into five districts so that this district, for instance, would run from let’s say Provincetown down to, I don’t know, Orleans, Harwich, Brewster, pretty much encompassing all of Representative Peake’s district. And there would be a district in Falmouth and so on and merged with other towns. So there would be five districts, five County Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates would remain pretty much the way it is now.

The third option in order to give each Delegate an equal vote as opposed to the percentage vote that I just described, we would divide the Cape into districts. And currently we’re looking at 11 districts. And the reason we have 11 is because -- one of the reasons is because the precincts divide up pretty much evenly. Each precinct would have to have an almost equal number of residents, Cape Cod residents within a, give or take, maybe 5 or 10 percent.

So we’re looking at that. So instead of having a town representative, you’d have a representative from your district. There would be 11 members of a single Legislative body. There wouldn’t be County Commissioners. There wouldn’t be -- Assembly of Delegates would be one Legislative body.

Each member of the Legislative body would be elected at the biannual election by these newly created districts. And they, in turn, would hire an Administrator who would be a very strong Administrator similar to some of the Home Rule Charters that have been passed in the towns over the last 20 years where they would -- the Administrator would do most of the hiring and firing, sign most of the contracts and run the day-to-day business of the County. And the Legislative body would pass a budget and basically set policy.

So that’s in a nutshell and hopefully you’re familiar with it. And with that, I'll open it up to anybody who wishes to speak. Janice, do you have the list? Usually my explanation is longer winded, that’s why we don’t have the list over here.

**Public Comment Session:**

Clerk O’CONNELL: Jari Rappaport is first.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Jari Rappaport, yes, okay, who started all this.

**Ms. JARI RAPPAPORT:** As a frequent visitor, you probably know what I’m going to say but here goes.

I represent the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod area. We wanted to say that we were very pleased with the hard work of this committee in outlining for you both the positives and the problems with alternate suggestions for a County structure.

Ever since the recommendations of the Special Commission on governance in 2012, strong positions have been taken by various groups. Your approach gives everyone a chance to think through all the alternatives of proposals from a kind of fresh start looking at goals and how to get there in sort of a different framework.

The challenges facing our regional government are many. They include wastewater,
offshore pollution, transportation, land use approaches to sustain and preserve our limited resources, and population changes which affect our economy and require responsive action to build a vibrant layered population which includes children and young people.

These are very strong challenges. They require, we believe, a regional approach. And our County Home Rule Charter was designed to provide a basic structure to make this possible.

Our towns give us a strong meaningful identity, a sense of belonging, grounded in our history and they serve as well for local governance.

However, the framework to enable all parts of the Cape to tackle necessary action jointly is not now sufficient. Our current structure is diffuse. We need a structure in which government can anticipate and discern problems as they arise, can seek problems/solutions, and bring us together for decision making on a timely basis.

To do this, we need to develop a structure which will provide clear leadership, responsibility, and accountability. Our current government has spread these attributes thinly across too many layers.

We believe an increase in the clarity of leadership, responsibility, and accountability will lead to a corresponding increase in the effectiveness of government. It would also increase County visibility and citizen understanding of County functions and issues kind of lacking today.

At this point, we favor a Strong Executive to give visibility and leadership to the County role in meeting these regional issues. This puts the plans the current Administrator who responds to policy decisions of the three elected Commissioners.

We also believe the current structure should be replaced by a single elected board council which represents a broad cross-section of Barnstable County. This would give real meaning to the legal standard that gives equal standing to each persons vote; one person/one vote.

This new body could carry out both policy and budget oversight combining the functions of the Board of Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates. The duties of such a merged body require each member to have a broader and more in depth understanding of the issues facing the County.

At this point, we have no position on the size or the method of compiling it, but we have come to the census on the need for such a spot.

We believe regional representatives would help foster greater public understanding of regional perspectives and solutions. Such representatives would be in regular contact with their various constituencies. They would be able to both hear the individual concerns and to respond to those concerns with interpretations and solutions that help the constituency see the benefits of regional approaches while not detracting from any town’s uniqueness in terms of its identity.

Thank you.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Thank you. Mary Lou Petitt.

Ms. MARY LOU PETITT: Thank you. It's nice to be up here again. I'm Mary Lou Petitt. I'm from Eastham.

Just to give you some background so that you'll know that I'm speaking at least from direct experience.

I was a member of the Assembly of Delegates for 14 years as a representative of Eastham. For 8 years, I was the Director of the Lower/Outer Cape Community Coalition, and I was a member of the Special Committee on regional government that Ron mentioned earlier.

My experience with regionalism has been direct and on the ground and one-on-one.
From our Community Coalition, I just wanted to tell you the various regional programs that grew out of the lower Cape towns working together: The Homeless Prevention Council, The Community Development Partnership, The Children's Place, the Flex Bus, The Ellen Jones Dental Center, Together We Can, and Barnstable County Human Services Advisory Council.

Those would not have been in existence if the towns had tried to do them on their own. But as a result of the work of the eight lower Cape towns coming together, all of these agencies which are still in existence and doing good work came into being.

I’m going to speak in support of the third option. And to do that, I want to speak on two specific topics. One, and I’m going to go back two things that I read a lot and just give you short updates on what I took out of those.

And the first one was the Peanuts cartoon strip with Charlie Brown and Lucy, whom I can sometimes relate to, one time said -- she took her hand and she said, “Look at my hand. Separately these figures can’t do much of anything.” But she said, “You put them together and, wow, you’ve got a fist.”

Now I think that you can do that with individual towns and by a regional approach separately, and I found that to be true on the Assembly of Delegates. And I certainly found it to be true in my work as a community organizer. Your voice, your actions and your results are stronger if you work together reflecting your own uniqueness but working with others.

The second quote I’ll give you is from another book I read a lot, the Bible. And Psalm 125, which says, “As each flower in its uniqueness blesses the garden, the inner connection of all the flowers brings it to fulfillment.”

And I really think that the issue that we keep hearing about the local towns losing their power and you don’t get our voice if you regionalize and make us part of a whole is absolutely false. I think bringing those unique towns together, maintaining their separate identity which we’re all so proud of makes it fulfilled and reflects the needs, the issues and brings you to direct action much more effectively than if each town had to speak on its own.

We all first are Cape Codgers. Secondly, we reflect our towns and there are differences between the Upper, Mid and Lower, but we need to reflect those differences by speaking together.

And I know I introduced an ordinance when I was on the Assembly of Delegates, the first ever for housing. And the reason it passed was because I went to each of the lower Cape towns first and had their united support for the ordinance. And that helped us get it through. I've seen it in action, this regional approach.

So I hope that you will consider when all these issues about each town and protect my town come before you, look at the real effectiveness of regional approaches which keeps the uniqueness of each town paramount.

And the last issue I want to make in support of the third option is the digital age. I think what we’re seeing is the complexity of issues with the new digital age. How we communicate, bombardment of emails. I think we need to be united and look ahead and know how best we can be effective, efficient, and moving forward then where we are now. It isn't just change for change sake. It’s change recognizing that we’re on a whole new territory. We can't even begin to know what the digital age will bring to us.

My daughter teaches at Nauset High School, and I was talking to her about what they were doing it, and I know you’ll know this, Bill, with computerizing the schools. And it’s nothing like what it was in the past and it won’t be that way in government either.

So I do hope you’ll take those two things into consideration and realize for the best of the
towns and the best of the County, the regional approach is the best way to go.

Thank you.

Mr. DOHERTY: Before Mary Lou leaves, I’d like to remind people here that not only was she a voice for housing here on the Lower Cape, she was also an important voice for transportation.

I was in the room when she got up to speak one time when we were promoting the Flex route I think it was, and somebody said, “Well we don’t want to hear from you. We already know what you’re going to say.”

So the point is that the Speaker, I had the privilege of serving on that housing committee with her. She does an awful lot of work, and I believe that that time that we made some real great progress with regard to important -- what we've come to see is entry-level housing for people who work here.

So, I wanted to thank you publicly again for all your hard work.

Ms. MARY LOU PETITT: Thank you, Bill, and I do think the regional issues are the ones that are going to keep confronting us now.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Cheryl Andrews for Alex Ritchie.

Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: Hi. Thank you, very much. I’m Cheryl Andrews. I’m the Assembly Delegate from Provincetown.

Before I read Ms. Ritchie’s remarks, I’ll simply say that you’ve already received my testimony on my perspective back a couple weeks ago. I also spoke with Mr. Bryant from the Provincetown Board of Selectmen a couple of weeks ago.

And after all this time and watching all of your meetings online, I will say that my views haven’t changed, my personal views. I’m still very much in favor of one town having a Delegate at the Assembly and also in favor of this proposal to see the Board of County Commissioners go from 3 to 5.

Like Mary Lou, of course for anyone who doesn’t know me, I see a lot of this from a number of perspectives because I grew up in Barnstable but I live in Provincetown now. So I understand the big town experience and I understand the very smallest town experience.

I have relatives in Falmouth, and my grandmother lived in South Yarmouth, and, you know, that’s the idea absolutely is being a Cape Codder.

And having said that, I care a great deal about the Cape and look at it from the perspective of what's best, and my views on County governance haven’t changed from what I expressed to you a couple of months ago.

But I was asked to read a statement for someone who couldn’t be here today and I’d like to do that. And here it is and when I’m finished I’ll give it over to your staff.

“I have asked the Provincetown Assembly of Delegates member, Cheryl Andrews, to read this statement into the record at the public hearing scheduled to be held on October 9.

I worked for passage of the County Charter and the Cape Cod Commission legislation and represented Provincetown on the Commission for many years. As such, I care deeply about the governance that the citizens and towns of Cape Cod agreed to put in place.

The towns by equal vote on the Commission and by weighted vote in the Assembly are key to this structure which is federal in nature as is our United States government.
There is an effort afoot these days to undoe this federal structure and combine legislative and administrative powers in the hands of some 3 or 5 or even 11 County Commissioners. There would be no balance of powers, no break on abuse particularly as it relates to tax expenditures and it risks the structure of the Cape Cod Commission.

When Barnstable County voted in its government structure and at the same time created the Cape Cod Commission, the two entities were interrelated in a way that specifically gave the residents of the various Cape towns a vote on the regulations which would govern the Commission, to wit, the Regional Policy Plan, which is the basis for Commission regulations must be adopted by the Assembly of Delegates.

The current proposals to eliminate the Assembly whether unwittingly or intentionally pose a great danger to Commission regulations.

Without an Assembly to vote on the Regional Policy Plan, Commission regulations will have no legal basis. The only solution to this is to open up the Cape Cod Commission enabling legislation, which would be like playing with matches in a tinderbox, and could lead to untoward and unregrettable -- excuse me -- and regrettable results.

If the proponents of this change put forth an argument that some variation of a Board of County Commissioners could substitute for the Assembly, it would still risk the Commission’s legislation as noted above, which may or may not be a goal of the proponents.

And, further, it destroys the concept of towns having a say in the planning and regulations which they should. It is yet one more way to disenfranchise the Lower and especially to Outer Cape towns.

We see in many places in our nation right now that bad results are ruled by a tyranny of the majority, a clear concern of the authors of our Constitution. And it is shameful that here on Cape Cod where the Mayflower Compact was signed, we now see an effort to do exactly that.

I urge the citizens of Cape Cod to defeat this attempt.”

And this letter is signed by Alex L. L. Ritchie, 8 Commercial Street, Provincetown, Mass.

I'm sorry I didn’t do the kind of justice she would. She’s a better public speaker. But many of you know her from the years she spent on the Cape Cod Commission.

And before I leave you, I’ll say thank you all very much for taking the time out of your lives to hold this Public Hearing out here on the Lower Cape.

The fact that we lost a few of you here is just proof that traveling for some of these meetings is not easy, but I think you’ll see from the number of folks here that we are all very concerned about your proposals.

Thank you.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Thank you, Cheryl.

Ms. CANEDY: May I ask the speaker a question?
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Sure, ask away.
Ms. CANEDY: Ms. Andrews, as a Delegate yourself, a lot has been made of the current structure not be fair to the smaller towns in that the weighted vote, I’m from Barnstable, the weighted vote is heavy for the larger towns like Barnstable and towns like Provincetown have less of a weight.
Is that of concern -- that has been made -- a big deal’s been made of that. And that’s one of the rationales for moving to a regional district model. So could you comment on that?

Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: Sure. Sure. One thing I will say from my experience at the Assembly sitting next to the Delegate from Barnstable is that we all hold our breath to hear what he has to say when it comes time to vote.

But I can say there have been a number of times when an ordinance or a resolution passed without his vote. So it would be a mistake to think that just because the largest town votes for something it’s all said and done. Quite the opposite.

The real point here is that I might not have a large percentage voice or vote at the Assembly, but I do get a chance to make my point, so does Truro, so does Wellfleet, so does Eastham, so does Orleans.

Even if it takes a lot of time for us to say what we have to say, that gives a chance for some of these folks from the bigger towns to hear what we have to say and weigh the value of our comments.

That’s really the point of the Assembly of Delegates. It's not just about numbers, but it's about points of view. And that's what we're afraid would be lost if you eliminate all those Delegates from the Lower Cape and replace it with one person. Certainly if that one person isn’t here, you don’t hear anything.

But secondly, for one person to be able to express all those views, I don't think it’s going to happen. I know they would try but it wouldn’t. Certainly hearing Barnstable express their views four times, which is what would happen. I guess you’d have three or four members don’t necessarily add to the conversation either.

And that's what I've always brought to the conversation is when I'm on any board or commission, and I’ve got about 23 years now of public service behind me, I like to listen to everybody whether they’ve been on that board 10 years or they’ve been on the board two minutes. I want to hear what they have to say.

Sometimes it’s the old-timers, no offense, guys, I’m an old-timer now, but you get set in your ways and you don’t hear what the new people have to say. So you bring in some new people and you look at it a different way.

So from a weighted vote perspective, I get that point. But I think you’ll see by this room full of people, we don’t feel that way. We enjoy having the ability to explain our viewpoint which often times is a different one from a more rural perspective to the larger towns.

Ms. CANEDY: Do you find yourself as towns sometimes binding together with a common goal or a common opinion?

Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: Not necessarily. No. It depends on the issue.

Once in a while, in this case, I’d say we all agree. We’d like to see one town/one Delegate remain. I think we agreed on that pretty much, although I shouldn’t speak for everybody. But, no, I wouldn’t say we vote in a block at all, no.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay. Thank you. I think the other person -- doesn’t Julia sit on the other side of you?

Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: Yes, she does.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: She has 14 percent of the vote.

Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: Yes.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Barnstable has 20.

Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: That’s right.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: You have one.
Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: They keep an eye on me. I love that --
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Well, you make up for it in volume what you lack in votes.
Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: Thank you. I try to.
Ms. TAYLOR: I can understand why the Delegates like having one Delegate, but if I
lived in Provincetown, I might want a little more power.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: All right. Judy Thomas from Chatham.

MS. JUDY THOMAS: I am Judy Thomas from Chatham. And this afternoon I am
speaking as an individual, but I want to explain why I’m speaking as an individual rather than a
member of the League of Women Voters.

When the League studied County structure, it was almost entirely on the basis of the
recommendations of the Special Commission. Therefore, we did not consider the possibility of
an 11 region Legislative body.

And, in fact, in studying the recommendations of the Special Commission, we could not
come, as Jari mentioned, come to consensus on the size of the Legislative body. We could only
come to a consensus on a smaller than the current 15-town represented body and that we favored
one person/one vote rather than proportional voting.

Since then, as part of the County Committee of the League, I have been part of that
committee’s further study and discussion. But a League committee does not decide a position
for the entire League unless it goes through the study and consensus process.

So it’s very important that you understand that -- that aspect of League protocol and that I
am speaking for myself.

In my opinion, the highest priority when it comes to the goals for the structure of a
regional government should be, first, a structure that greatly enhances the possibility of regional
thinking.

Secondly, a structure that provides for one person/one vote.

And, thirdly, a structure that increases the visibility of the regional government and
strengthens accountability while clarifying responsibilities.

Therefore, I strongly encourage your endorsement of Option 3. The option which I
believe has the most potential for achieving these goals.

Option 3 has the greatest potential for strengthening the regional government for Cape
Cod, the Cape Cod of today. This Cape Cod is not the Cape Cod of 1988, when the first Home
Rule Charter was adopted.

To name just two things, the Cape has grown in population and then much more recently
as shown in the 2010 census has started to decline and is shifting to the West.

Further, we know that much more about the fragility of our environment and the critical
need to protect it.

The 11-district map of Option 3 provides for subregions within the larger region which
offers tremendous potential for increased inter-town cooperation. The much less densely
subregion of the outer Cape towns share many of the same concerns.

The Lower Cape area shares several characteristics and we are already beginning to see
increased cooperation between Chatman and Harwich.

The bay regions comprise areas with similar concerns. The densely populated town of
Barnstable currently wielding almost a quarter of the voting power in the Assembly of Delegates
in one person becomes divided among subregions but with parts of other towns that have strong
similarities regarding some of the issues they face.

Because of the creation of 11 districts with similar numbers of residents, Option 3 does provide for one person/one vote. The ideal standard in democracy.

Option 3 greatly reduces the diffusion of authority by eliminating the current Board of Commissioners and merging their policymaking and functions into the legislative body.

Appropriate checks and balances, though different than what is currently, can be built into this new structure. Between the strongly appointed Administrator/Executive carrying out the policy and goals of their Legislative body and the Chair of the Legislative body, whatever name it would end up with, there would be a single consistent regional government voice for Barnstable County.

Vision establishment and goal setting would be more efficient as would be the execution of the goals. All of us would greatly benefit our region and improve the status quo, which is Option 1.

Let me take on some of the arguments against Option 3. Firstly, some have argued that Option 3 would be hard sell. It might well be. Many persons are almost naturally resistant to change which obvious involves some element of discomfort with the new and some amount of the unknown.

Change should not be made as Mary Lou, I think it was, said for the sake of change alone. Change should be made when there is clear evidence for the need for change highly regarded and experienced members of the Special Commission, the Business Roundtable, and the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod area who have consistently followed regional government since it began have all advocated for change based on sound reasoning.

So how hard might a hard sell be? Hard sell, as Ms. Taylor who has enough years experience with regional government to know has pointed out, is the reason the original Charter writers of the Home Rule Charter went to proportional vote and each town having it’s own representative.

They would’ve preferred regional representation, as she said, but settled on town representation as an initial step in producing the first Charter. That reason two and a half decades old is no long good enough for moving toward progressive thinking.

I would hope that at this point with the need for regional thinking even more apparent with a much larger proportion of newer residents now living on the Cape, residents who are no so steeped in tradition that the hard sell might be less hard, would be worth the effort, and would actually be achievable. Simply because something is hard is not a reason for attempting it.

Second, some have argued that even the smaller towns have extremely little power when it comes to the vote, they still have voice. I understand that this is important to them.

But under Option 3, individual towns would continue to have a voice, though a different voice, through the many moments of open forum and discussion that would continue to come before the Legislative body.

It has been shown in recent years that there is power in one or two voices, voices who are not even necessarily members of the Assembly of Delegates when it comes to the ability to press the Assembly into a desired action. All it takes is patience and perseverance and a reasoning that includes logic and good facts. Voice would be changed under three but not lost.

Regarding Option 1, the status quo. One comment frequently heard, “If it ain’t broke, broke don’t fix it.” To me that’s the same as saying, “What we have is good enough.” But I submit that good enough is not good enough. Progress is all about rejecting the status quo in
favor of what is likely to be better. There is probably nothing under the sun that can’t be improved. Nothing that shouldn’t be should be examined to see if there might be improvements to increase the useful of a product.

And I can’t resist the analogy; my cell phone. My first cell phone was maybe 20 times larger than my current phone and all it could do was make a phone call. What if that first manufacturer had said, “Good enough. It ain’t broke.”

Since so much has changed on the Cape, demographically and environmentally, and since so much has changed in technology, in the economy, and in other areas of need, it seems obvious that the status quo can’t reasonably be considered “good enough.”

I commend the Assembly for appointing the Charter Review Committee for their serious work in moving forward. The structure of County government can be approved and needs to be improved.

I'm optimistic in believing that the committee will conclude also that the status quo is not good enough for the next decades.

Regarding Option 2. Increasing the present Board of Commissioners to five members elected regionally and maintaining the current structure for the Assembly of Delegates. This option does broaden a regional approach among the Commissioners, but that pro is greatly outweighed in my opinion by the increased diffusion of authority and responsibility.

Worst yet, it goes on to leave the Assembly of Delegates with the present system of proportional voting. No one person/one vote. And with the basis of representation that fails to increase regional thinking and processing.

I urge one final thing. That as you weigh the testimony you hear and consider the pros and cons of the various options that you and others have raised that you assign a value to those pros and cons. What are the more significant? Which are the less so? Which are of the cons might be overcome.

So I thank you again for this opportunity for the public to share its views with you before you move forward. And I thank you for undertaking this important task and wish you good luck.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Thank you.
Ms. CANEDY: Could you submit your comments so that we can share them?
Ms. JUDY THOMAS: I will.
Ms. CANEDY: And that’s the same for Ms. Andrews.
Ms. CHERYL ANDREWS: I did.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Dave Schropfer, another familiar face here on the Outer Cape.
Commissioner DOHERTY: I think this is all the usual suspects.

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Mr. Chairman, I’m Dave Schropfer, former Selectmen, current Moderator of Eastham, and current Chairman of the Intermunicipal Cooperation Committee on the Outer Cape. So there is cooperation among the Outer Cape.

We started off from the first day and discovered there were 33 things we were already doing together; 33. And now we’ve added another 25 to those.

One quick example was one of the Department of Public Works employee’s attended our meeting saw the idea of cooperation and called the other towns and some towns not in the group that the Intermunicipal Committee represents, which is Eastham to Provincetown. We got 8
tow

towns together and they saved $160,000 on a contract they were all working on; $160,000 all just by sharing and cooperating.

I’ve come from a town of 110,000 people. I live in one now with about 5,500, about 5 percent of that. I’m fascinated by however the Assembly was constructed. That does not follow one man/one vote even though it appears that it does.

Weighted votes are not what they have in the United States Congress. The most remote person representing North Dakota has the exact same number of votes as every other one of the 435 members of Congress. I don’t know quite what it would take to have an Assembly that actually gave one vote for each on some representative basis for the entire 215 or so thousand people on the Cape.

But what you have today is wrong. It disenfranchises a lot of towns. Do you realize that 40 percent of the Assembly of Delegates is here right now and there are only three people who have votes. That if Linell walked in here you’d have 50 percent to vote on anything you wanted. And every other town not represented here would have no voice. And that’s exactly what happens.

I had a person from a large town at one of your meetings one time say to me, “Well, your intermunicipal group only serves the smaller outer towns. We’re not going to vote for anything that will help that. Why should we pay for anything for you guys?” On the other hand, why should anybody out here pay for anything back there?

So in order to make this one body that works together and that has the same agenda, you have to realize what you did when you created this committee. It’s chaired by the Chairman of your Assembly. It is represented right here right now by more Assembly persons than anybody else. Why would you have an organization face the issue of putting yourself out of business? What body every puts itself out of business? They almost never do.

So even though I favor three, it means you’d all have to face new territories, new election territories because it wouldn’t be by one town.

And one of the other frustrating things that I’ve noticed from many towns that I talked to and I see them every other month is that sometimes the Delegate doesn’t talk to the town. They are freely elected. They are freelancers. They have no connection whatsoever to town government at all. The town Board of Selectmen cannot direct them in how to vote. They have no power at all to speak.

So I want to put this in context that Barnstable County is the most effective County in the state. And I realize people from Franklin County will challenge that but they’re not the same structure that we are.

My belief is that for the County to go on -- I really love some of the things other people have said among them that it ain’t broke but it could be better is a very important thing to remember.

We could be better. We could be more effective. We could represent the towns better but not the way you’re going to do it.

Now notice that Option 1 and Option 2 leave the Legislative branch, yourselves, in power. How can you possibly vote for anything that doesn’t leave you empowered? People don’t do that. Maybe you will but I want it clear and I want it on the record that this committee is heavily weighted toward the status quo. Why even spend the time and the money and your efforts if you’re just going to say, “Well, we’re not going to vote ourselves out of business. Why would we ever want to do that?” You should do it and you should do it under Option 3.

But Option 3 makes a critical error. It says that the Executive branch is an appointed
County executive. How in the world can anybody have an appointed Chief Executive Officer of a town or of a County or of any other Legislative body. You must elect the person who is the head of your body, the head of the County.

Ms. TAYLOR: He would be elected by the Delegates. He would be elected by that group.

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: That is not what I’m talking about. I’m talking about that person being elected by the people, not by anybody else. The Senate of the United States and the Congress of the United States does not elect the president except if there’s a tie, and I can go through all of that because it’s a fascinating process what happens if there is a tie.

But in any case, my belief is that person must be elected or why not just follow the structure of the group, which you’re getting very close to, the structure of town government? Town government has an Administrator. In most towns, that’s a Strong Administrator. Then they have the Board of Selectmen; they are the Executive branch. And the people at town meeting become the Legislative branch.

So how do you do that? First of all, change the title of Executive branch for the appointed County Executive could be appointed, that’s fine, but not the CEO. The CEO would be the next level down which is the Legislative branch so-called here. I would call that the Executive branch, that’s the 11 people.

And in order to get a second body of opinion, the towns come back into play here. The towns through town meeting can give you the kind of vote that you really want to hear; what do the towns want to do? You can do that by accumulating all of the votes from all of the towns and determine whether or not something that the Legislative body wants to do -- I’m sorry, that the Executive body wants to do. And that may sound a little cumbersome but it really is the exact same thing every town goes through every year, year after year after year, and it can be done.

I do want to comment on some of the cons against Option 3. One of them was unknown cost. I would like to say that the Assembly is an underpaid group. One of the things that happens in government service, which I’ve been in for a little more than you; I think I’m 28 years but same category, Cheryl, and that is that the lower the pay is, the fewer people who are underpaid or less privileged can represent the government. So the government counts those that are rich or those who have enough money to be able to handle the expenses.

I sat in the room the day that you voted down your salary from a thousand to $500 and listened to one person say, “I can’t even pay my baby sitter and the gasoline to get here out of that $500.” Because you meet twice a month, that’s a least a minimum of 24 meetings a year. And let’s just say you happen to come from the Outer Cape or from Falmouth or from Bourne, your expenses are high. What result do you have? Five hundred dollars to offset that. That’s just not fair nor right.

If you want this concept to work, you’re going to have to spend more money at it and it would be a right thing to do. And also for the appointed County Executive would then be called the County Administrator.

I don’t want to take up any more of your time, and I’m sorry that I did not prepare this because I wanted to hear what other people said before I came on because I might be last. I’m not sure if anyone signed on.

But I would like to say that there are changes that need to be made and the votes are sitting here in the room. You need to talk to maybe one other person to be able to affect a change. And that means you’ve got to really think about it.
Twenty-two percent of the vote sits in your chair, 4 there, another 15 there. So if you add that all up, you’re looking at more than 40 percent. And you really have to consider what a difficult position you’re in. You’re in a direct ethical conflict of interest if you say I’m going to continue to support the Assembly as it stands just because I want to keep my job.

So you really have an ethical issue if that’s your only motivation. And I’m sorry to speak that way to you but you made the mistake in the way you formed the organization. You made a mistake in having the Chair be the same Chair as the Assembly. How can the people, how can we, the people, all of us, how can we believe any decision you make when you’re self-serving? When you didn’t think okay we should have a chairman who is independent. We should have people -- you want to hear what the people have to say, don’t be the people at the committee. But it’s too late for that. That’s all happened now.

And if you’re going to correct it, you can correct it by how you vote. And what we’re asking for if you look at 1 and 2, they leave you alone. Only 3 changes and 3 is the way to go with the suggestions and recommendations that I made.

And I thank you very much for listening and for hearing me. I’ll be glad to take any questions.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay.
Ms. TAYLOR: Comment. I’d like to comment, if I could, Mr. Speaker?
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay.
Ms. TAYLOR: I have brought up this issue at the Assembly. So if you want to go back and read the Minutes, you can see that I did suggest that this was a conflict and it was a problem. I don’t consider this committee -- Ann Canedy is not a Delegate, so she and I can’t vote anything.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Oh, okay. Sorry.
Ms. TAYLOR: But I do think that this is -- your comment I don’t feel is quite accurate in regards to this Charter Commission, but I definitely think it’s relevant to the Assembly.

However, our Charter, and I have mentioned that when I served on the original Charter Commission I promised not to run for the office the first time it came up.

So I’ve suggested this. But the Charter that we’re operating under requires the Assembly to take a vote on this issue. So whatever Charter changes might come up, there is no way under our present Charter to have a vote that doesn’t involve the Assembly.

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: For everyone to understand, that means that after you have made a decision and the Charter Commission makes a recommendation, it goes back to the Assembly.
Ms. TAYLOR: It goes to the Assembly.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: And then they take a vote and then what happens?
Ms. TAYLOR: And that is the only vote that action consequences. This Charter Committee could recommend something which the Assembly would not agree with because, in fact, since she's not on the Assembly, there is not any majority on the Charter Commission that’s also a majority on the Assembly.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Right.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Let me add to that for a minute. You’ve got to understand that this process was not initiated by the Assembly. It was not even initiated by the Commissioners. Well, actually, it was in some way initiated by the Commissioners but they didn’t come to any definite decision as to where they wanted to go.

The League of Women Voters after a couple of meetings made some suggestions. We
got some communications from the Business Roundtable, and then the Commissioners formed this 24-member body, both Julia and I were on the body along with Mary Lou Petitt and several other including town managers and people -- there was 25 of the who's who on Cape Cod were on this committee, and they deliberated over the course of a summer. We had meeting after meeting. It was chaired by Senator Rauschenbach, former Senator Rauschenbach and Senator O’Leary, and they came up with 14 recommendations after having subcommittees and so on. And they issued a report to the Commissioners who had appointed them. And there it sat; okay?

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Right.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: And the reason it sat there is because as Julia quite said, “The only way you can change the Charter in the current process is by recommendations going through the Assembly and the Commissioners.”

So, I formed this committee out of deference to the people who sat there and made -- because if I hadn’t, we wouldn’t be here and nothing would happen. I mean I’m not blaming -- I’m not arguing with you. I’m just telling you that’s why we do it. I agree with you. In most Charter Commissions, for instance in Chatham, they were appointed by the Selectmen but they weren’t Selectmen or town members. In Barnstable they’re elected, I think, weren’t they?
Ms. CANEDY: Yes, they’re elected.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: At the ballot. But the Charter Review and the County and probably the original Charter framers are partially responsible for that.

And we have the attorney here who, if you don’t know, Mike Curran, who is our attorney sitting quietly back there who’s a part of it too. But that’s the way it goes.

But you’ve got to remember to also, and I should have explained the process initially, we make recommendations to the Assembly. Assuming the Assembly agrees with it, they, in turn, I think the Commissioners have a say in it too as usual, then it goes to the Legislature who determines whether they want to put it on the ballot or not.

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Right.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: But the ultimate decision is made by the people of Cape Cod in the election. And the reason we’re sitting here now and the reason I formed this committed when I did was because of that time frame. In other words, working back from the election of 2014, it has to go the Secretary of the Commonwealth. It has to go on the ballot. The Legislature gets it. They don’t exactly jump on it. I mean it could sit there in the committee of the third reading for --

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: How well we all know that.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: So, we tried to begin this process. I’ve talked to Representative Peake. Fortunately, she is the chair of the committee that will be receiving this, the Committee on Municipalities, and she has asked me or recommended that we try to get -- that she would -- if, indeed, it did go to the Legislature, they would like to have a hearing by the first of the year. So we’re talking about a time frame of trying to wrap this up by the holidays.

And as far as the -- if you have any complaints about the makeup of the committee, you can blame me because I sat on a previous Charter Review Committee and it was assembled a great deal the way you recommended. And, unfortunately, whether it was due to the people sitting there or not, I didn’t chair it. It was chaired by someone else. And it just didn’t seem to work.

Since given the limited time frame, I said I wanted 7 people in the room who represented geographically the Cape, three Assembly Delegates. Julia is from Falmouth. I’m from Chatham. And Austin is from Provincetown. We put three at-large members but I wanted at-large
members who knew something about the Cape government. So I had -- what am I going to say --

- Austin is -- who’s the Outer Cape?
  Ms. CANEDY: Austin is Outer Cape.
  Ms. TAYLOR: But he’s a Selectman.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Oh, yeah, I’m the Outer Cape. I’m the Outer Cape representative from the Assembly and Suzanne McAuliffe is from the Mid-Cape. Austin is at-large from Provincetown. Linell is at-large from Sandwich, Ann, of course, is at-large from Barnstable. And all of them have considerable experience in government.

So although I agree with you the structure is awkward. I inherited it. I think the people who are at the table can do the job effectively because they understand how government works, as you do, and as I know many people here do work in it. So --

Ms. CANEDY: And that Linell’s not on the Assembly.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: No, Linell’s not on the Assembly.
Ms. CANEDY: And I’m not on the Assembly.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Right. That’s why I say they’re at-large.
Commissioner DOHERTY: And I’m not on the Assembly either.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Of course Bill -- Bill is watching over all of this from the perspective of a County Commissioner.

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Yes.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay.

So --

Commissioner DOHERTY: I want to point out something and then we’ll move on. In Chapter -- I don’t know if it’s Chapter 34 or Chapter 35 under the Act that the formation of your Charter Review Commission can actually be put on the ballot and that people could run for it.

I don’t think that we’ve ever chosen to do that because of the cumbersome nature of that, and because of what I’d call the expansion of the amount of time that it would take to, let’s see, recruit people to run and also to, let’s say, stand for election. And at the end of the day, it would still have to come back to the Assembly.

Ms. CANEDY: Bless us.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Yes.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Correct.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: I looked up that. That’s the alternative method we inherited and it’s in the current Charter. If you looked that up, we would be working out into probably half way through the century if we went through that process.

Ms. CANEDY: Bless us.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: We would be holding an election in 2014 for people to be on this committee which would then have a time frame of years.

Ms. CANEDY: Plus Barnstable elected theirs and spent 9-10 months creating a new Charter proposal which the people turned down. So either way you look at it, there’s no ideal way.

Commissioner DOHERTY: I want to add one other thing. The one thing that I had thought was very important in the formation and in support of what I’d call a good Charter review process was to have an attorney on board from the beginning rather than in reaction to a question that would come up.

And as a result, the Commissioners appropriated and got the support of the Assembly to hire Michael Curran who does have experience in the Charter process in Barnstable County as well as other places to be part of this as an observer and commentator throughout this whole
To me, that brought an element of not neutrality, at least an element of objectivity to this whole process because we were getting the support of an observer who was an informed person with regard to process.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Yeah. And by the way, weren’t you a member of an organization that had a weighted vote, remember it ran busses and stuff. I seem to be chair -- I remember chairing that.

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: And you the chairman.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Yes and the RTA has a weighted vote on financial matters.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: I have to tell you that Eastham got hit with the highest bill per capita of any of the towns and we were unable to get that fixed.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: They fixed it for every other town that the Flex Bus runs but not for Eastham. So there are times when your voice doesn’t get heard.
I’d like to, if I may?
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Sure. Go ahead.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Sort of summary of --
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Yeah, I don’t have any names but after you finish, I’ll call to the audience.

Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Okay. I’ll try to be short. But I was elected by a committee of 15 people to be Chair of a Charter Revision Committee in Stamford, Connecticut, town of 110,000 people.

And we had from the time the Charter was first written in 1949 to 1989 when this one went forward; they have never passed a single revision. We put together 205 changes, changed the language of the Charter which took it from, “He, the mayor, he shall do the following things” to the “The mayor shall do the following things,” so women could also feel that they had a shot at this and not everything being toward men.

And all 205 changes were approved. And the difference was that we were all nonmembers of the Legislative body. Some five years later or 10 years later, the Legislative body did the same thing again, appointed a Charter Revision Commission, only this time they loaded it up with their own members. And they had a four year -- they have a two-year term. They had to be reelected every two years.

The first thing they voted on was let’s make that every four years. I said, you know, the United States Congressmen serve only for two years and have to face reelection and you guys want to go for four years. You’re the lowest closest to the people elected person that you could be and they still voted themselves a four-year term of office.

So that’s one of the reasons why I’m a little anxious about this. But your explanation, Mr. Chairman, was very satisfying to hear it, and I do understand that it was languishing if you hadn’t stepped forward. None of us would be doing this.

But I thank you. I hope you’ll consider this --
Chairperson BERGSTROM: I do agree with your proposal that we should get paid more.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: I understand. And I’ll put that forward for you since you can’t. Thank you.

Ms. TAYLOR: One further point I would make, I think that it would be wise to read the minutes of the Charter meetings to get a sense of how the discussion has gone because I think that might influence your view of the self-serving nature of the members. I’m positive it would.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Yes.
Ms. TAYLOR: Secondly, I think that these three options that have been put forth it’s sort of obvious that the existing has to be an option since it exists.
The second one is something that has already been passed by the Assembly so it’s would seem odd if that were not at least taken into consideration.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: So, yeah, that was an ordinance.
Well, thank you, Dave.
Mr. DAVE SCHROPFER: Thank you.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: I’m sure we’ll here more from you as this moves through the process.
Ms. CANEDY: Can I add something too?
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Sure, add away.
Ms. CANEDY: As someone that’s not on the Assembly, I’d like to point out that Option 3 is the closest then to what the town of Barnstable has as its own government, a Strong Administrator and a representative Legislative branch that is created through precincts.
So I, again, would challenge your presumption that we’re all flocking in on Option 2 or Option 1 or Option 3 for that matter.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Well, I think we have to be out of here at 6, so I’d like to hear from any other members of the public that would like to speak on this matter. Do we have any? Yes. We have a familiar face there. Mr. Bryant.

Mr. GEORGE BRYANT: Yes. My name is George Bryant, and are you going to present all three options to the Assembly or one?
Chairperson BERGSTROM: I suspect not, but I mean --
Mr. GEORGE BRYANT: Okay. I’d like to talk about the map where it should have had the town boundaries on it because it’s difficult to figure out exactly where some of the town boundaries are. And it could have been done on an 11 x 17 sheet with colored ink where the town boundaries are. It’s a little bit difficult to understand.
I would support Option No. 1, and I think that the Lower Cape deserves to have individual representation. And it doesn’t make sense to bundle them altogether because the towns are quite different.
Here we are in Orleans. They have twice the population of Provincetown and yet they have the same budget. What are they doing right?
I think that the other options are, especially when you consider the way the boundaries are going to be changed are the districts, I think are rather confusing. And it should be a lot simpler, quite frankly.
My father used to say, “When you get to the drive-in theater Wellfleet it's a different Cape at the end. It's not quite the same.” I know the Cape has changed. I've seen it change for the last 76 years. And yet there are some places that are relatively unscathed by the large movement of people here that ended a few years ago.
But I think that we have in the Charter Commission that Julia served on, we have a representative from every town. And on the previous one that started in March of 1982, we had a representative from every town. And I thought it was very lively and interesting because there were different attitudes expressed by different people and it was fascinating. I got to know a lot of people whom I still know from that second Charter Commission.
So I hope that you support Number 1, and thank you.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Thank you.
Ms. CANEDY: May I ask that speaker a question?
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay.
Ms. CANEDY: Can I ask you a question, Mr. Bryant? If you support Number 1, would you consider supporting Number 2 since that leaves the Assembly as is with each town being represented but it does create a more regional approach with the Commissioners?
Mr. GEORGE BRYANT: The County is a region. That's the real region.
Ms. CANEDY: So the Commissioners, five of them, would represent the regional interests.
Mr. GEORGE BRYANT: Yes. Well --
Ms. CANEDY: And the towns would retain their independence.
Mr. GEORGE BRYANT: That’s 225,000 people, which is a small city and that's a nice region.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay. I see a hand up there behind Mary Lou. Yes, please, come up to the mic and identify yourself.

**Ms. BREON DUNIGAN:** Hi. My name is Breon Dunigan. I’m on the Board of Selectmen in Truro. And I’ve come to this whole process with a completely open mind. I’ve heard a lot of things today. It’s been -- and I appreciate your having the hearing.

I have really grave concerns about not having a voice. I feel like what's been said by the people from the Outer Cape that when we’re talking about the weighted vote, at least we have a vote. If we don’t have someone from Truro elected, we have no vote at all. We have no voice. And I’m very concerned about that.

I think that County government is not the thing that's on most of the people's minds. I don't know how it is on the Upper Cape but it's not until we’re electing our County Commissioners it’s not like a big thing we’re thinking about all the time.

So I think that I’m not going to say which -- I mean we’re very much in support of whatever kind of regionalization we can do and cooperation that the towns and the County can do, but I think it’s very important from my point of view personally that we continue to have a voice at the table.

Thank you.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Thank you.
Commissioner DOHERTY: I have a question for the speaker.
Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay.
Commissioner DOHERTY: One of the concerns that I’ve had over time as a County Commissioner is that the Cape Cod Commission is part of the County government. How are you doing in recruiting somebody from Truro to sit on the Cape Cod Commission?

Ms. BREON DUNIGAN: We’ve had a very hard time recruiting somebody from Truro to come to the Cape Cod Commission. It’s a huge, you know, amount of time, responsibility. It's a long commute.

And as you know, the commitment not only to the meetings but to the groups that you have to be involved with and the site visits and so forth. We’ve had a hard time doing that.

Commissioner DOHERTY: You’ve had the great -- if I could continue? You’ve had the great good fortune of having very active representatives from Truro. Presently, Ms. McCutcheon
is representing you and she’s a very vocal and articulate member of the Assembly.

However, in past times, it used to be a teacher; I think, but in any case, there was some difficulty in getting somebody that after having run usually unopposed to get somebody to actually show up at the Assembly.

I believe during the period of time that I was on the Assembly; the attendance from Truro was kind of spotty. So the argument, and I’m just posing this as let’s say as the debating point, the argument about having a regional representative for the Lower Cape based upon someone that would be able to represent the region without having to make the commitment for one town to, let’s say, to travel and to, let’s say, and have some independent means of being supported is something that resonates with me because of that experience on the Assembly.

And I was wondering as we speak about this voice, you have an excellent one now, and I mean that sincerely, Deborah. I’m not trying to patronize you, although you might accuse me of doing that.

But I wondered what would happen if she decides to take a higher advocacy role with the gorillas in Africa and not be around here anymore?

Ms. BREON DUNIGAN: Well I think that’s where the incentives that are put in place by the Delegate, you know, the Assembly now are very important. Similar incentives the town of Truro is thinking of putting in place for its volunteer fire department, you know, to make people want to run and want to show up.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Yeah, I would like to get -- the purpose of this meeting is to hear from the public.

Ms. BREON DUNIGAN: Right.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: So they have the first -- I mean I appreciate your talking but we don’t want to do too much talking.

Ms. BREON DUNIGAN: Right.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: So I’ve --

Ms. BREON DUNIGAN: So one other point that I meant to bring up just about Truro in relation to the rest of the Cape is I don’t believe Truro is among the populations on the Cape that is increasing in population. If anything, I think its year-round population is decreasing.

So to make a blanket statement about the population really it gets me going, “Hey! You’re not representing us.”


Mr. DAVID DUNFORD: Thank you, Chairman Bergstrom. It’s nice to have you all here in Orleans.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: We know who you are but you’ll have to identify yourself.

Mr. DAVID DUNFORD: Dave Dunford, Selectmen here in Orleans. I will say a few remarks. I didn’t come here prepared with any. I didn’t think I was going to be saying anything. I wanted to listen to the debate. So my remarks do not reflect the Board of Selectmen in Orleans. We have, in fact, have not had an in-depth discussion on this particular issue.

I find your handout very, very helpful, and I think we hopefully will have a discussion on this in the very near term.

But I did want to share with you my immediate reaction to what I’ve heard. I will have to say that I find Option 3 rather difficult to back.

Why? Certainly my experiences and I’ve been a Selectman now for nine years, and have
seen how towns work. I’ve seen how the County works.

Having an 11-member district representative with no other body and appointing the County Executive is really not a Legislative branch. I think you’re fooling yourself quite honestly if you consider that a Legislative branch.

A Legislature does not appoint its own Executive branch head. I would hate to think that if we had on the United States basis say a House of Representatives appointing --

Chairperson BERGSTROM: They do it in England.

Mr. DAVID DUNFORD: Maybe that’s why we started here in the U.S. I think of the House of Representatives appointing the president, and I think you see a dysfunctional government in Washington that would be even worse.

No matter what, a body that appoints its own Executive I think has an accumulation of power that will inevitably make it an Executive body and the people will lose voice.

And I very much admire Mr. Schropfer and his comments. He’s a good friend. I’m not sure I’d go along and I would hate to -- some of you may not go with this but increasing compensation significantly for representatives. I think that further alienates representatives from the people that are -- make it more of a career path and not a representative path.

So, I guess what I would say here is that I think the fact of you would lose significant checks and balances with Option 3. I think that also you have to look back at what we are here on the Cape and we are different. We are different because we are -- we share issues. We share a number of issues but we pride ourselves in being individual towns. That’s what we are.

And I think if -- I wasn’t around when the whole County government started but my impression was that it really started at the behest of or on the backs of individual towns. That’s why you have the set up right now. Its individual towns that make up what we are. And I think our stepping back from having each town have an individual voice no matter how the percentage vote, I think again further distances County government from local government.

I in Orleans truthfully would not like to see us have a share a voice with Provincetown, Wellfleet, Truro, and Eastham. I love our neighbors. They’re all very good people but we all sometimes have different ideas at different times. We have a voice. We wish to have a voice on an individual basis.

So I guess where I would come out at this stage really just getting into the depth today is Options 1 and 2. I think, to me, make more sense. Two, I’m learning more about but I think that that could very well work.

I think I haven’t looked at some of these cons. I wasn’t aware of some of the quorum issues and so forth and so on, but I think an Option 2 could very, very well work in terms of providing a little bit more regional thought.

But, again, we’ve heard our own representatives and our own County say what they want to do. Think regionally, act locally. You’ve got to have the local thought, the local representation. Don't take the voice of our town away.

Thank you.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Just, yes, Deborah. Would you like to speak?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I just have literally two minutes, maybe three.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Janice, do we still have to be out of here at six?

Clerk O’CONNELL: Yes.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: We have to be out; otherwise, I’d let you talk forever but they’re kicking -- the town of Orleans is kicking us out of here at six o’clock.
Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Then I will be as brief as I possibly can. I’m well known to the people from the Assembly. I’m Truro’s representative to the Assembly of Delegates. And my position in Truro ought to continue to have representation on the Assembly is I think well-known to everybody in this room that’s paid any attention to this debate.

So, that being said, listening tonight this commentary, I think there are two things that are being to a certain extent confused. There’s a talk about a need to change the structure of County government but to what end?

We hear the need to increase public awareness. We hear the need to greater efficiency and visibility, but there hasn’t been any demonstration in any discussion as to how these proposed changes are connected to that end result, other than in this theoretical kind of idea.

What I think is happening is that there’s advocacy for a structure without analyzing what the structure’s going to do. Now the idea of abolishing the Delegates, the Assembly of Delegates is an old one, and, essentially, that’s really the only idea that this, as I understand Julia’s exposition, that came out of the discussions of the Charter Review Committee. That’s the idea that we’ll look at the existing structure because we have to. That’s what’s here. We’ll look at what the Assembly voted because they voted it and then we’re going to look at this other proposed structure that’s been kicked around for a while.

Now what does that end result come out to? I don’t believe with all deference to the eloquent speaker who said it, I don’t believe that having an opportunity at public comment/open mic night or when you invite the public to come is the same as having a right to be heard at the table.

I am certainly new to the Assembly. This is my second term. I appreciate your comments and kind remarks. I urge you to understand that, at least in my opinion, Massachusetts founded itself as a Commonwealth country, Commonwealth state, and what that means is that it’s a Commonwealth of cities and towns. And County government grew out of that. The cities and towns are the life blood and the support of this County government. And I think when you ignore them, you cut them or dissipate their voice and dilute it, you cut them out of the opportunity to be part of a regional process.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Okay. I would like to say just two comments that I’d like to make and one is that a news story I picked up within the last couple days. I don’t know if anybody’s paying attention, but the governor, Governor Patrick has proposed merging some of the housing authorities.

The housing authorities I know in Chatham they’re elected. I presume they’re elected in the other towns too and town by town, and Bill serves on the Housing Authority. So his concept was it would be more effective if we regionalize the housing authorities rather than have them run town by town.

The reason I picked up the news story is that our entire Cape delegation has sent a letter to the Governor saying they’re against it.

And the reason they’re against it and I’m sure they didn’t flush this out is because as the previous speaker just said, Massachusetts is a Home Rule state. The towns are very powerful and they have a tradition of town by town government.

So beyond whether the pros and cons of having the housing authorities regionalized are offset by peoples’ investment in their own communities.

So that’s something that we are wrestling with. The yin and the yang could be more
effective regionally or what about peoples’ tie-in to their community and what about that tradition in Massachusetts. It’s tough to balance.

All right. So that’s one issue.

Commissioner DOHERTY: Yes, I must add that as a long-serving member of the Housing Authority in Harwich is that when these people from the state came to the Mass. --

Chairperson BERGSTROM: “These people,” you say that with contempt.

Commissioner DOHERTY: No, no, they were. When they came to the Mass. Municipal Association Committee that I serve on, I told them that consolidation of administrative work at a central level made a lot of sense, but to remove the voice, and this is the argument we’re hearing tonight from members of the Assembly, to remove the individual voice of a community from matters that could concern the community is something you have to worry about.

Now Barnstable, for example, could, if they accepted that, would be able on a regional basis they’re the largest town, they could decide to put housing in Yarmouth. And I will tell you that having faced the emotional content of a town meeting when we were trying to get some property for housing; everybody would be for it if we built it in Brewster instead of Harwich because they like the idea and those they wanted --

Chairperson BERGSTROM: But the other thing -- point I’d like to make before we start to wrap this up is that the County government’s dedicated to regionalization but there’s two kinds of regionalization. One is to say that towns can get together and do something more efficiently and less expensively. Let’s say they regionalized all the assessing departments and they’d save some money. They regionalize the dispatch and they saved some money. So you can go to Truro and Barnstable and so on and you say, “Look, we’ll do this altogether.”

But there’s another kind of regionalization which is more important and I think something that Mary Lou Petitt’s been involved with is when you regionalize -- when you attack something that the towns don’t have the power to attack. For instance, housing is one of them although there are housing authorities. I’m bringing up the subject of prescription drug abuse and some of the problems we’re having now with overdoses and the hospital emergency rooms and so on. It’s a Cape-wide problem but it’s not something that each individual town could do.

I would like to the County get involved in issues that are broadly part of Cape Cod and less involved and certainly will be involved in trying to help the towns out. But we are a regional body. That’s how we see ourselves. That’s how the Commissioners see themselves, “We represent the Cape.”

And the idea that this committee and changing the potential changes in the County government have to more effectively fulfill that mission.

Okay. And if we have one more -- Mary Lou did you want --

Ms. MARY LOU PETTIT: In connection with the housing issue, I came from Bergen County, New Jersey. We had a Bergen County Housing Authority. You could or could not join.

I was also on the Eastham Housing Authority. I see great value in a County housing authority which can do things and the towns were involved closely with that County housing authority.

So it's too bad that people immediately jump and say we can't be or we'll lose all our power. You could or couldn’t if you wanted to join the Bergen County Housing Authority. But it did things that not local housing authorities could not do and was very successful.

Chairperson BERGSTROM: Yes, I agree with you but I’m just looking at -- I’m just curious as to why everyone is against it.

So have we exhausted this topic? Is there anyone else who would like to speak? We
have another meeting coming up a week from today in the Mid-Cape. This is our Outer-Cape meeting. That will be held where we usually hold our meetings, which is in the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates room in the basement of the Barnstable Courthouse.

At some point within the next month, we’re going to come to a decision as to what to submit to the Assembly. I presume it’s going to be one -- it’s not going to go beyond the options that we expressed today, but we will probably take a vote and decide to push that option in so that this is just the beginning of a long process.

Should this committee recommend changes in the Charter, as I said, it will go to the full Assembly. They will have public hearing on it. If they agree, it will go to the Legislature. And if anybody wants to schlep themselves up to Boston, I’m sure they’ll have public comment.

And, ultimately, it will be decided by the voters at the biannual election in 2014 should it get that far.

So I appreciate you all coming. We’re under time constraints. And anybody who wants to comment further can either send something to the Barnstable County -- to the Assembly of Delegates through the Barnstable County website or you can come to our meeting next Wednesday and express your views there.

Thank you, very much.

Whereupon, it was moved, seconded, and voted to adjourn the Charter Review Committee Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Janice O’Connell, Clerk
Assembly of Delegates